

Intent Data 101

The marketer's guide to identifying
and targeting in-market buyers



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Inform and Ignite Your Marketing Strategy with Buyer Intent

Being a marketing leader isn't for the faint of heart. Your main task is a big one: create and execute a successful revenue-generating marketing strategy that outperforms your market.

When the [CMO Survey asked marketing leaders in 2024](#) why their companies performed better than market, the top three reasons were:

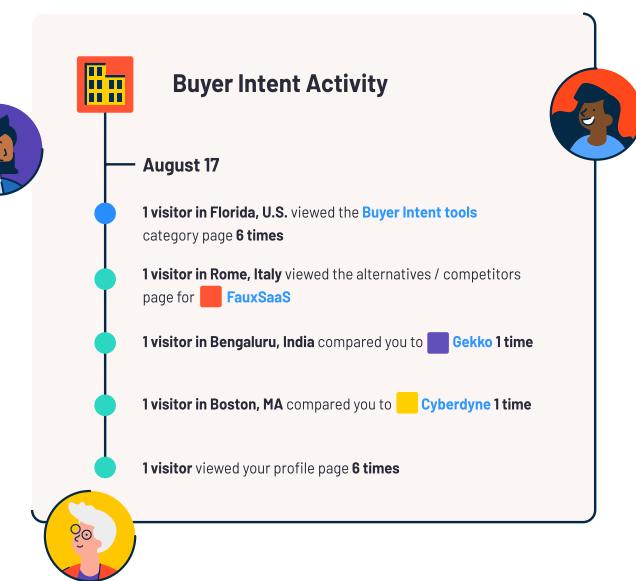
1. An effectively differentiated strategy (60%)
2. The right go-to-market (GTM) capabilities (55%)
3. A well-executed strategy (49%)

Your strategy for higher brand awareness and demand growth must be innovative to get the job done. But that's not all.

You're facing greater budget scrutiny. You also need the right GTM tools and processes while optimizing your marketing resources. The good news? A strategy propelled by buyer intent data can help you fulfill this mission.

In this two-part guide, we'll cover intent-fueled strategies for marketing leaders. This first part is a crash course on:

- What makes a marketing strategy intent-fueled?
- The different types of buyer intent data to be aware of and incorporate into your strategy.
- The best ways to gain a competitive advantage with buyer intent data.
- How to measure success.
- Why use G2 Buyer Intent for your intent-fueled marketing strategy?



What's an intent-fueled marketing strategy?

Buyer intent data is crucial for any effective marketing strategy.

Think about what happens for most prospects. According to the [G2 2024 Buyer Behavior Report](#), buyers complete 70% of their journey before directly engaging with a vendor. This means making a purchase starts with online research and content that cuts through a noisy marketplace.

Most buying journeys start like this:

- Google searches
- Product/[customer reviews](#) and testimonials
- Educational (top-of-funnel) articles, whitepapers, and eBooks
- Video content, like webinars, recorded demos, and testimonials
- Social media, thought leadership, peer reviews, and other [content](#) that indicates nods of approval or disapproval

All of this activity generates data points called buyer intent signals.

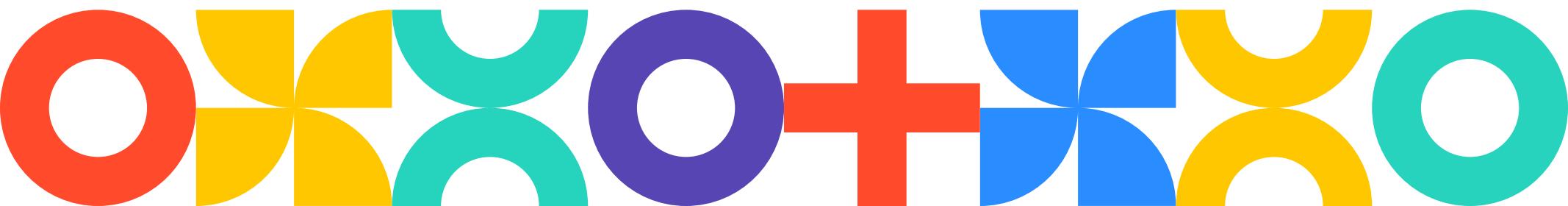


G2's Buyer Intent data has helped us to better reach out to in-market accounts, which has led to sales closing faster from leads who have already done their research."

Arti Prasad

Director of Digital Marketing

[Read the case study](#)

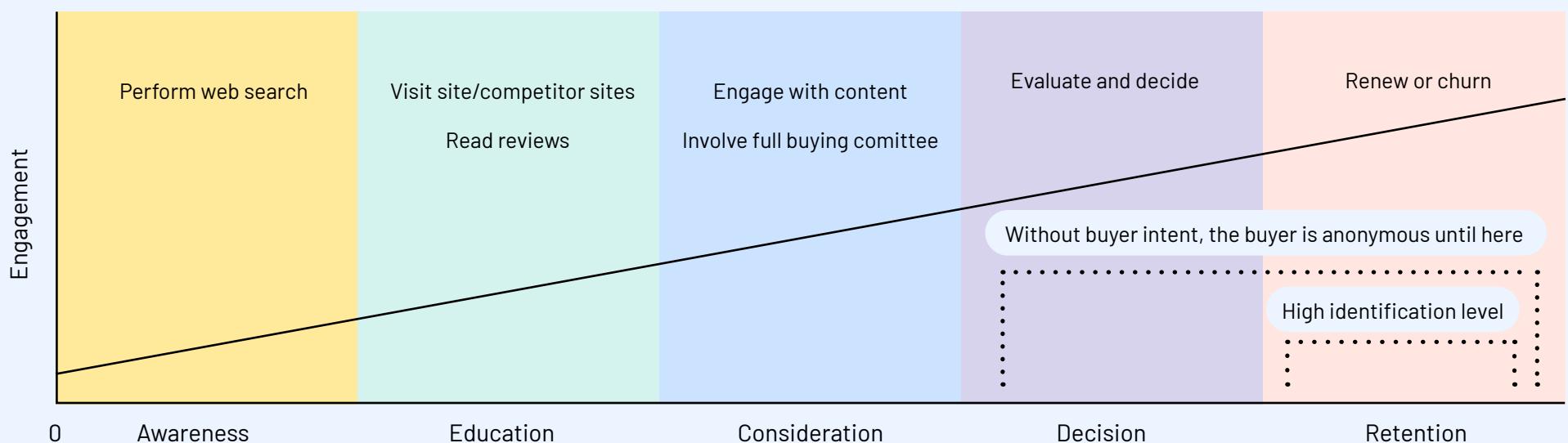


Considered together over a given time interval, all of these data points provide insight into prospects' or customers' buying intentions. As a prospect moves through the buying process or a customer goes through the renewal process, these signals reveal:

- Where the prospect is in their buying journey, or if a customer may churn.
- Competitive intelligence on other solutions they're considering.
- How they engage with content and marketing channels.

Buyer **intent data shines a light** on the dark buyer's journey. Lighting up the funnel, the right kind of buyer intent data gives complete visibility into whether an account is at the beginning, middle, or end of the buying or renewal process.

The B2B Buyer's Journey





Intent Data and the Buyer's Journey

When most marketing leaders think about buyer intent data, they often think about the data generated by search engines and publishing networks, known as Third-Party Data.

Third-party buyer intent is widely available from many vendors, including native account-based marketing ([ABM](#)) platforms.

It's most valuable in the very early buying phases and for ad targeting—so it's no surprise that one recent report found that [65% of B2B companies](#) planned to invest more in buyer intent data, even though 61% face shrinking or static budgets!

But there's another data source that complements third-party buyer intent, and every technology and software company can benefit from including it in its strategy.

Three broad types of intent data



1st party intent data

Data you own like marketing automation or CRM data; collected about customers and prospects, and their interactions with your website, social, and email channels (via any tools you use).



2nd party intent data

Someone else's first-party data, usually collected by trusted publication and review sites.



3rd party intent data

Commoditized data originating from digital sources like web search and engagement, advertising, apps, ad networks, publishing networks, analysts, events, and data cooperatives that is packaged and resold with a built-in time-delay.



Second-party intent data offers even more value.

Buyer intent data from a second-party data source offers entirely different benefits.

Marketplaces and software review sites, like [G2](#) — where millions of buyers go to learn about software categories and products — offer the best example.

The value of second-party intent data stems from authentic peer reviews

Review volume, traffic, activity, and engagement across reviews, profiles, categories, competitors, and sponsored content power the second-party buyer intent engine. To understand why, think about how you arrive at buying decisions in your personal life.

While you collect information via a search engine like Google (creating third-party buyer intent data), you still tend to trust

real customer feedback more than a brand. You diligently gather information and research other people's experiences who already made a similar purchase. In the digital world, learning from other people's experiences generally includes reading reviews.

The more expensive the product, the more time you'll spend reading reviews. For example, you'll spend many hours researching a car but almost no time to buy a bag of rice.

Most importantly, there's no mystery why a buyer is on a software marketplace and review site. Unlike media sites that also produce second-party data, nobody pours over review sites for personal enjoyment.

People read product category descriptions, reviews, comparisons, and alternatives for one primary reason — it's time to fill an unmet need and buy a new product or service.

Get our best tips for collecting more reviews.

[Watch webinar](#)



Intent signals influence pipeline growth.



DEMOGRAPHIC



FIRMOGRAPHIC



BUYER INTENT



ENGAGEMENT

Role	Company revenue	Company profile views	Social media shares
Level of seniority	Competitors	Sponsored content views	Email marketing clicks
Geographic location	No. of employees	Competitor page visits	Paid social media campaign performance
Age	Industry	Category page visits	
Gender	Org. structure	Alt. page visits	

Proprietary algorithms make buyer intent actionable.

Proprietary algorithms track millions of buying signals from second-party software marketplaces and review sites. They then combine them into actionable **Buying Stage** and **Activity Level** filters.

Algorithms use page engagement and signal type as buyers interact across the software marketplace and review sites to determine their Buying Stage.

Meanwhile, algorithms use general activity across the site to infer activity level and combine it with user behavior, such as dwell time on

a page and total number of pages visited.

Again, let's go back to how you buy a product. If you need to decide quickly, there's a good chance you'll fly through many different page types as you research other options. This high activity level indicates you're in the later stages of the process and close to a decision.

Proprietary buying stage and activity level filters help marketing and sales teams target and convert their ideal buyers more efficiently. This is another reason why second-party buyer intent data from reviews stands out from other buyer intent types.

G2 Buyer Intent Signals



G2 PROFILE SIGNALS

Company profile page visits when customers and prospects read reviews, download content, and watch videos during top-of-funnel shopping



SPONSORED CONTENT SIGNALS

Sponsored content visits on a competitor profile, showing top or mid-funnel stage



CATEGORY SIGNALS

Product's category page visits to see how products rank and explore available solutions, so it indicates top and mid-funnel



ALTERNATIVES SIGNALS

Visit to other products in your category, indicating that a customer may switch, or a prospect is leaning toward a competitor



COMPARISON SIGNALS

Comparisons run between your product and up to four competitors when shortlisting solutions in the mid-funnel stage



Only second-party data intent reliably shows in-market status.

Research shows that up to **95% of people or firms in your target market aren't in-market** right now, leaving **5% or less of prospects in a target market as truly in-market at one time**.

To understand what this means, again, think about how you buy.

Say you need a project management app. Most marketing teams need and use one, so you're in their target market.

However, since your company signs 3-year contracts, you are only in-market – in that 5% – for a few months every third year.

Apply this to your company now: with no idea of the 5% who are in-market right now, your marketing team targets the whole market, unnecessarily leading to:

- Lower conversions and win rates
- Longer sales cycles
- Higher costs
- Lower productivity
- Wasted marketing budget

Second-party buyer intent uniquely enables marketing to identify and target that elusive 5%. You can identify them and learn from their behaviors. You can also execute intent-fueled strategies to engage, convert, and close them more efficiently.

As our 2024 Buyer Behavior Report explains, a shrinking pool of in-market buyers means making it to a software buyers' shortlist is more challenging.

That's why reaching in-market buyers is even more critical as soon as they reveal they're researching and ready to buy!

So next, let's go into the second-party buyer intent data's accurate and actionable insights you can't find anywhere else.

Want to learn more about leveraging buyer intent on G2?

Start with a demo



Intent Data and Competitive Positioning

Using G2 Buyer Intent data, marketers can uncover accounts researching their company, category, and competitors.

UiPath™

G2 is a good way to look at the competitive landscape. Our sales force can access real sincere insights [and] comparisons. That's crucial in today's world of transparency and our salespeople appreciate it."

Bobby Patrick
CMO

[Hear more from Bobby](#)

Once you have this insight, you can target accounts researching competitors the moment they're in-market for a product like yours.

When a prospect looks at the Alternatives page in your product category or compares you to a competitor on G2, use these buyer intent signals to add prospect accounts to a "competitive" audience on G2. Then, target these accounts via display ads and/or paid social ads highlighting your competitive advantage.

Make sure to share these accounts with your sales team: if it's a prospect account in an active sales cycle, your sales team should know there is competitive intent so they can respond or prepare adequately.

If there is no active sales cycle, sales should reach out quickly to make sure they start a conversation before someone from one of the other solutions they're considering reaches out first.

Include a G2 Compare Report in your campaigns to answer prospects' questions about how your solution differentiates from others—before they even ask. This content compares side-by-side based on satisfaction ratings and highlights the leading product for each metric.

Another option? Consider leveraging insights from competitors' customer reviews to identify their weak spots. This is an opportunity to prioritize messaging that will resonate with prospects researching your competitors – differentiating your solution.

Demand intelligence.

In every marketplace, growth opportunities are hiding in plain sight. Intent data illuminates them, revealing previously overlooked parts of the market.

You can get [insights on demand](#) like:

- How many unique buyers do we have per week/month?
- Do conversions verify our personas? Are we targeting the right ideal customer profile (ICP)?
- What percentage of buyers in my CRM are also active on G2?
- How many buyers aren't in my CRM but are actively shopping on G2?
- What are the trends in sales cycles over time?
- What's the level of urgency most prospects have?

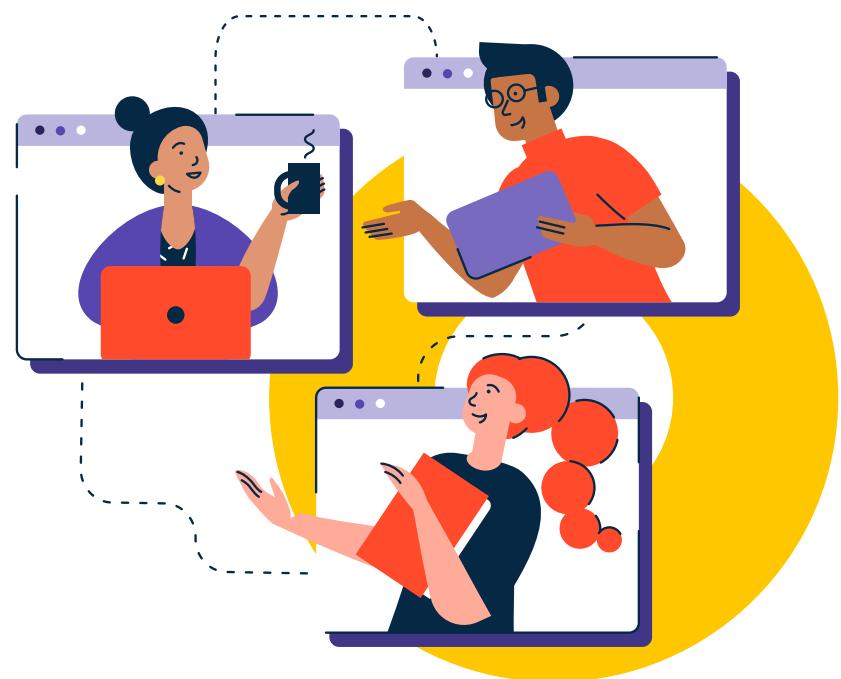
So, how do you apply demand intelligence to your intent-driven strategy? Here's another example.

You notice a spike in intent signals from prospects in an industry outside of your ICP. This shows a vertical with product/market fit and untapped demand, opening new possibilities.

If intent signals from this vertical continue to grow over time, add this industry to your ICP and target it with its own campaigns to drive demand, leads, and, ultimately, more revenue.

Strategic revenue intelligence.

Building and maintaining profitable revenue requires seemingly superhero levels of agility.



Insights from buyer intent answer many questions.

With second-party buyer intent data, you can answer questions like:

- How many current customers searched competitors or alternative pages for each quarter last year?
- Is this overall trend going up or down?
- What's important to customers?
- What types of customers are searching for competitors?
- Any trends from accounts that are looking down-market?
- Or other accounts who may be looking for a more end-to-end solution instead of a best-of-breed solution?
- Which accounts are in-market?



PRO TIP

Don't forget to make sure teams use attribution and UTM tagging where possible.

UTM tagging is very reliable for attribution of intent-driven marketing tactics. Even using a parameter as simple as "BI" allows for analysis. This way your team can know what works, what doesn't and make the right mid-course corrections.





You bury prospects with personalized campaigns. But even when you've won them over, you need to woo and win again to retain them. The right insights can make a difference.

Armed with accurate answers to these crucial questions, you can quickly and confidently decide which accounts to retain using new pricing strategies in the short term and which to let go. You can also **prioritize those** in-market accounts and determine how much to spend to reach them.

Apply revenue intelligence to your strategy.

Here's an example of what that looks like:

You need to improve customer revenue growth and reduce the annual churn rate by 10%, so what's the best course of action?

You're considering:

- Changing go-to-market tactics
- Upselling lesser-known products
- Re-allocating marketing resources from new customer acquisition

The team examines your second-party buyer intent data and discovers interesting news: many current customers and prospects keep returning to your G2 add-on product pages. And in the past six months, you've only seen this trend grow stronger.

You also find that accounts are looking at competitors offering a suite of features.

This indicates that customers want to leverage more functions or apps in your suite rather than point solutions alone.

The best strategy is upselling customers and prospects to your entire solution suite, which will reduce churn and increase revenue.

Plan a smarter strategy with buyer intent.

[Start with a demo](#)



How to Build Intent-fueled Marketing Strategies

While you can learn more about executing intent-based marketing strategies in part two of this series coming soon, we'll touch on why second-party buyer intent data is uniquely [valuable across the whole funnel for building pipeline](#).

AWARENESS

- G2 Category visits
- G2 Profile visits
- Sponsored content visits



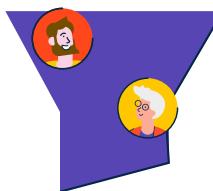
CONSIDERATION

- Alternatives page visits
- Comparison page visits
- G2 Profile visits



DECISION

- Comparison page visits
- Pricing page visits
- G2 Profile visits



Insights help move buyers through their journey.

Buyer intent reveals truly in-market accounts.

From there, intent data gives demand gen teams crucial insights to move buyers from the top of the funnel where they are researching solutions—to the bottom of the funnel where they actually buy.

Second-party buyer intent data shows demand gen and revenue marketers what the buyer is looking for and when they're looking for it.

It helps them be more intentional about the content, topics, and creative they serve so that they can improve [funnel performance at every stage](#) with insights that help:

- Choose the best content topics and most appropriate assets
- Design effective creative
- Refine messaging to deliver the right message at the right time

For example, when your team logs into myG2, they'll see named accounts that repeatedly return to your G2 Category, Profile, and Competitor Pages.

With this intel, your team can retarget those accounts to advertise content highlighting your product differentiation from competitors—keeping you front-and-center along the buyer's journey.

When it comes to campaign performance and sales-marketing alignment, second-party buyer intent also delivers key insights like:

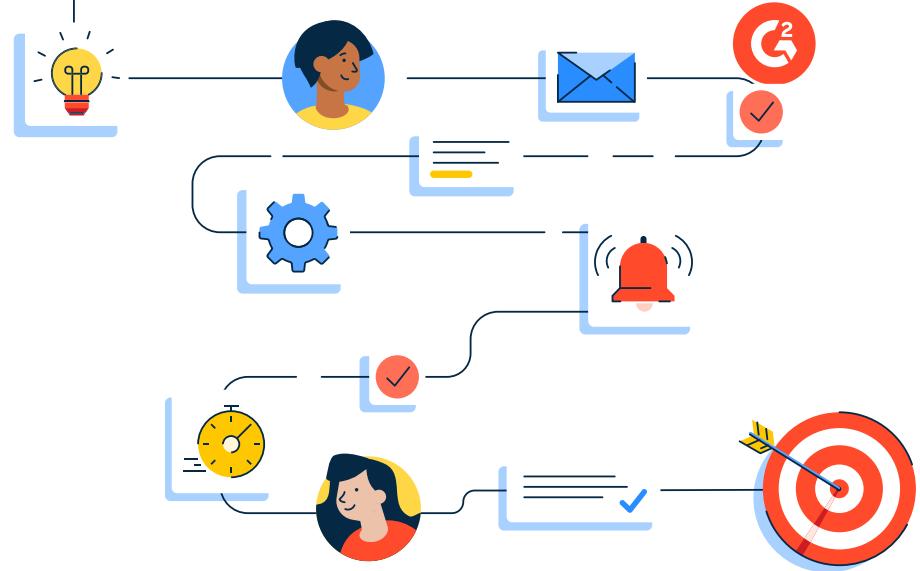
- Why do we lose so many MQLs when they pass to sales?
- Which campaigns yield the most qualified leads?
- How many sales and marketing interactions are required to convert a prospect into a customer?

Improve performance across marketing channels.

Once buyer intent data identifies that an account in your ICP is looking at you on a site like G2.com, your team can then retarget that account in campaigns across any marketing channel.

For example, you can:

- Automatically trigger the addition of an account's contacts to an email drip campaign to position your brand as the market's trusted thought leader
- Retarget accounts with LinkedIn ads (or any social media platform) to grow brand awareness or address specific pain points uncovered by buyer intent data
- Personalize ads based on content topics a user downloaded from your G2 Profile



Most importantly, regardless of your MarTech sophistication or use of an [ABM tool](#), second-party buyer intent delivers unmatched visibility and value. It also drives sales and marketing alignment to contribute to building a quality pipeline.

Getting started is easy since you can layer intent data and ABM into a traditional MQL waterfall model.

Over time, you can use more sophisticated marketing technology, processes, and campaigns to increase overall success.

How to Measure Success

How can you prove the ROI of buyer intent market insights? Focus on measuring how it impacts campaign performance.

1. Define your goal(s).

Look at an existing campaign and pick specific key performance indicators (KPIs) as your goals. Some examples include lowering customer acquisition costs and social media advertising spend.

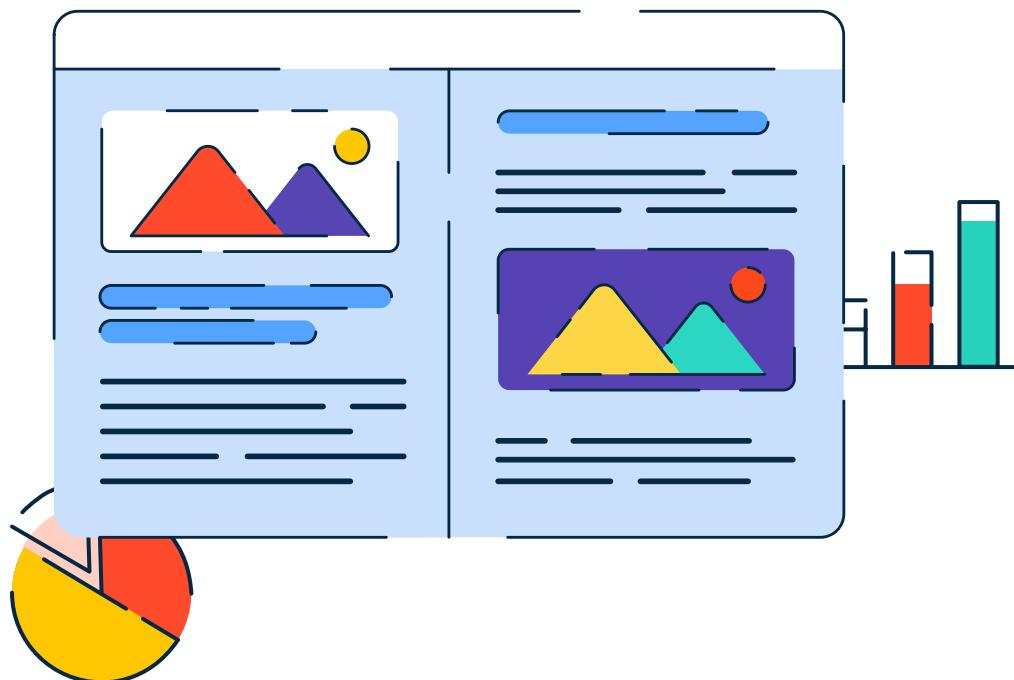
2. Document baselines.

For the chosen KPIs to track, document your existing baseline. This is your initial benchmark against which you'll measure performance after incorporating second-party buyer intent into your strategy.

3. Run A/B tests on both your organic and paid campaigns.

By split-testing paid ads, you can see what's influencing performance. Run the first ad with messaging informed by intent data and the second ad without that messaging.

You can also split test ads using identical messaging to two different groups. One group to target is an intent-based audience, while the second is a group you target using your traditional method.



It's also important to ensure you're using two different UTMs - one for your BI audience and one for your non-BI audience.

This way, as leads get passed in your CRM or analytics software, you can independently track down-funnel performance for each one.

For organic campaigns, you can also create two groups. The first doesn't use intent signals; the second uses intent signals to target, tailor 1:1 outreach, and serve different messaging based on intent signals to drive engagement.

4. Monitor testing and choose the best performer.

Regularly check how your A/B test performs.

If you can clearly see that one ad/message outperforms the other, it's a good time to stop the underperformer. On the other hand, extend the test if you're not getting definitive results.

PRO TIP

Easily measure impacts of your second-party buyer intent investment by monitoring pipeline and revenue growth in your reporting tool or CRM.

G2 Buyer Intent integrations allow you to pull this data into your CRM and reporting tools so you can see which accounts have an intent signal associated with them.



How to Use G2 Buyer Intent

For successful execution with intent-fueled strategies, you first need to use the best buyer intent solution, which is a second-party buyer intent data source,

To choose the most appropriate one for you, think about two key factors:

1. In-market accuracy, quality, and reach
2. Ease of deployment and use

Once again, remember: the ONLY reason software buyers use software review sites is to research a product or service to buy.

Nobody spends precious time researching solutions and reading reviews unless they're actively seeking a new solution.

A G2.com visitor and their corresponding second-party buyer intent signals they generate accurately identify an in-market buyer.

In addition to in-market certainty, second-party buyer intent from G2 also indicates:

BUYER JOURNEY STAGE

Shown by engagement with given page types - even later buying stages.

URGENCY TO BUY

Revealed by activity level across the buying stages.





G2's unmatched scale and reach.

Powered by **best-in-class, proprietary Search Engine Optimization (SEO)**, any search for your solution or product category will likely land on Google's first page.

In addition, G2's SEO drives G2 Buyer Intent's value by generating millions of buyer intent signals around the world from:

- Reviews
- Products and services profiles
- Product and services categories
- Website visitors and B2B shoppers

G2 reaches 90+ million annual software buyers worldwide so that you can easily surface your 5% in-market accounts.

As a result, you're able to fuel your intent powered marketing strategy more efficiently—plus accelerate sales, reduce churn and expand accounts to grow revenue.

Ease of deployment and use.

When most marketing executives think about intent-fueled marketing strategies, it can seem like a lengthy, demanding integration process with an extended, slow Return on Investment (ROI).

However, this isn't the case with G2 Buyer Intent. As opposed to being a large, complex platform with a heavy setup and integration period, G2 Buyer Intent is an audience.

This means that within minutes, you can easily and quickly use it anywhere, including in sales, marketing, and customer success, ensuring maximum ROI.

Building smart strategies that find, engage, and close in-market buyers is simple with G2 Buyer Intent:

- Integrates easily with existing marketing and sales infrastructure and processes, so teams keep using the tools they already know and love
- Deploys quickly to work on day one with native, [**pre-built integrations**](#) to widespread marketing and sales technologies, including Marketo, Hubspot, and others
- [**Integrates and works in tandem with**](#) native ABM platforms like 6sense and Demandbase to amplify value
- Enables real-time account engagement without processing delays
- Maximizes marketing and sales productivity – thanks to accurate insights into intent – teams can deliver the right message, in the right channel, at the right time
- Improves marketing and sales alignment





Fuel your marketing strategy with powerful G2 Buyer Intent.

G2 Buyer Intent helps you identify your elusive prospects in real-time and provides all the insights you need for a well-executed, differentiated marketing strategy that outperforms your competition.

With G2 Buyer Intent, you get all the clues your marketing and sales teams need to accelerate the buyer journey with meaningful and timely engagement.

And when you integrate, operationalize, and scale that engagement all the way through your marketing and sales funnel, you ensure your prospects become your customers in shorter, more efficient cycles.

The result?

More customers, retention, revenue, and profitability. And what marketer doesn't want that?

Ready to learn how G2 Buyer Intent can fuel your strategy?

[Reach out now](#)



Explore more resources on intent data

eBooks

[ROI Study: G2 Marketing Solutions](#)

[Secrets to Proving ROI with Intent Data](#)

[Unlocking the Power of Intent Data in Advertising](#)

[Easy and Actionable Account-based Marketing](#)

Blogs

[Clicks to Customers - 5 Best Ways to Use Buyer Intent Data](#)

[6 Ways to Amp Up Your Sales with G2 – An Interview with Opensense](#)

Case Studies

[How impact.com Cut Their Cost Per Lead in Half with G2](#)

[ZoomInfo Sees 17% Higher Conversion Rate and 27% Lower CPL with G2](#)

[How Siemens is Leveraging G2 to Drive Competitive Advantage](#)

Videos

[How impact.com Cut Their Cost per Lead in Half with G2](#)

[How GoodUnited Achieved 400% ROI with G2](#)

Webinars

[Stop Marketing in the Dark: Reach In-Market Buyers with Intent Data](#)

[The Hard Facts about Intent Data](#)

[Churn No More: Harness the Power of G2 to Retain \(and Grow!\) Your Customers](#)



About G2

G2 is the world's largest and most trusted software marketplace. More than 90 million people annually – including employees at all Fortune 500 companies – use G2 to make smarter software decisions based on authentic peer reviews. Thousands of software and services companies of all sizes partner with G2 to build their reputation and grow their business – including Salesforce, HubSpot, Zoom, and Adobe.

To learn more about where you go for software, visit www.g2.com and follow us on [LinkedIn](#).

